

25 Feb 1971
Letter to Editor

Should People Vote On Canyon Road Proposal?

Editor Herald:

Every day, it seems, some one has something to say in regards to the proposed highway in Provo Canyon. Now I am a long ways from being an engineer, as the old saying goes. They had to burn down the schoolhouse to get me out of the second grade. But I do get a bee in my bonnet now and then.

Now we already have the makings of a divided highway in the canyon by turning the old Heber railroad grade into a southbound two lane highway up until you reach Nunn's then switching over to the now-existing highway. Then the now-existing highway could be used for northbound traffic, switching over at Nunn's again to the present railroad grade.

Straighten out a few blind curves from the mouth of Provo Canyon up to Spring Dell with about three exchange roads leading from the up-canyon road to the down-canyon road. Starting below Wicks Cabins, make a left turn over the river; another left turn back toward Provo, same procedure.

Again, below Bridal Veil Falls and a repeat of the same at Vivian Park. Since there is already a bridge at Vivian Park, there would have to be two bridges built on the lower stretch. This seems to be the simplest solution.

Now what about the Wasatch County? From Wildwood on over Deer Creek Dam and on up to Charleston would be a big bot-

tleneck unless, of course, Wasatch County went along.

Now I would like to relate a story to put over a vital point in the day when the West was being tamed and the Army was out in force. A certain man had a contract to furnish meat for the Army. Now since buffalo and deer were scarce, there were plenty of wild horses so the Army got fed up with horse meat. So the general asked the supplier if he could grind the meat and mix it with something else. The supplier said he could mix it with rabbit. So he did that, since rabbits were plentiful. He mixed the horse meat with rabbit and took the sample to the Army. They gave it a try and said it was much better.

Now here is the conversation between the general and the supplier:

General: "What percentage did you mix this meat?"

Supplier: "Fifty-fifty."

General: "What does that mean?"

Supplier: "One horse and one rabbit."

Now the point is, since this highway is to be paid from tax money and we the people are the taxpayers furnishing the horse portion and getting credit for the rabbit portion and the State Road is on the rabbit end and getting credit for the horse portion. Since this is for the people, by the people, should we or should we not have a vote on the matter. Just like when Deer Creek Dam was built.

W. K. Forshee
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Heber Valley Tourism Encouraged

27 Feb 1971
By JAN PADFIELD

Deseret News Staff Writer

The heartland of scenic, recreational America — maybe even the world — lies in an area 29 miles long and 17 miles wide in beautiful Heber Valley, residents believe.

This area, bounded by a 90-mile strip of land, comprising 2 per cent of the state's land mass and 90 per cent of her population, has so much year-round potential it is unthinkable to destroy it with "wall-to-wall asphalt through Provo Canyon," said officers of Wasatch Mountain Railway Co. on Friday.

The officers, who met with Republican members of the Utah House of Representatives at a Friday noon luncheon at Ramada Inn, referred to a high-speed highway proposed by the Utah Department of Highways through Provo Canyon.

"Democratic members are caucusing, at the Capitol and are unavailable, but they will have the opportunity to hear us," said Lowe Ashton, Heber City businessman and president of the railway.

The key to the area, Ashton said, is the trackage of the old Heber Creeper, which until two years ago belonged to Denver & Rio Grande Western —Railroad. He said the company finally gave up the 28-mile branch between Provo and Heber City by selling its right-of-way to the highway department.

From the turn of the century the creeper was Wasatch County's link with the outside world — transporting people, lumber, wool, livestock and practically everything else. Then came automobiles and truck lines.

The Highway Department now considers this the logical route for an improved highway, paid for in part by federal funds.

"That land has better use," Ashton said.

"To surround Deer Creek Reservoir, now scheduled for development of recreation by the State Division of Parks and Recreation, with a high-speed highway is unthinkable," Ashton said.

Wasatch Mountain State Park parallels Deer Creek Reservoir.

"What about fishing, boating and water sports? Since Utah Lake is contaminated, Deer Creek is the largest

fresh water body near the population center. In addition, we have Park City, Alta, Brighton, and Heber City. This state lacks imagination. We can out-Sun Valley Sun Valley and out-Aspen Aspen," Ashton emphasized.

"The land is more important for tourist and recreational needs than for any other entity. We must reconstruct our economy. This scenic railroad could become a tremendous tourist attraction in a very short time. Trackage is in place and in good condition. Scenery is superb. The highway could improve its existing alignment south of

the reservoir, while the creeper operates to the north," Ashton said.

Ashton pointed out that his group is not asking the state for any funds, only that the State Division of Parks and Recreation purchase right-of-way from the highway department and lease the operation of the Creeper to a qualified concessionaire.

The railway company owns the local depot in Heber City and seven acres of ground surrounding it and several antique steam engines.

The only objection to the company's proposal came from Rep. Robert M.

Arbuckle, R-Canterville, who said that a small trackage such as that in California's Disneyland should be sufficient.

All other representatives appeared to be in favor of the proposal as outlined by Ashton and Jim Berry, of the Golden Spike Empire (Box Elder, Weber, Davis and Morgan counties).

"We are the Golden Spike state, and it is natural we should put a scenic railroad in Utah. If tourism is to continue to develop we must find ways to interested tourists in spending more days in Utah each year," Berry said.

KCC Official Challenges Proposal By Rampton for Mine Tax Boost

An offer made by Gov. Calvin L. Rampton involving his proposed graduated mine occupation tax hike was declined Saturday in a letter from Kennecott Copper Corp. claiming the tax proposal discriminatory.

The reply was made by J. P. O'Keefe, general manager of KCC's Utah Copper Division, in a letter responding to one written a week ago by Gov. Rampton who supported the tax proposal and disputed contentions that it is unfair.

The governor said he was willing to recommend enactment of a law to legalize a formula Kennecott is now using in filing its corporation franchise tax in exchange for his severance tax proposal. The state is challenging in court the use of the formula, first used by Kennecott in 1967, which has resulted in decreased tax collections.

Same General Basis

"Not only Kennecott, but other taxpayers have been using the same general basis for their corporate franchise returns," Mr. O'Keefe said. "We believe the law presently permits the method now employed. Therefore, we see no need for legislative action."

The new method of filing was "clearly justified," Mr. O'Keefe said, "and counsel for the State Tax Commission's auditing division has conceded Kennecott was not bound by any agreements or methods of filing preceding 1967."



J. P. O'Keefe
Replies to Governor

Another question, he said, is whether the Utah Legislature would have the right to make special legislation which would decrease Kennecott's franchise tax in exchange for the proposed increase in the occupation tax. This would discriminate against other taxpayers, he said.

From 'Public Domain'

Mr. O'Keefe touched on various points in the governor's letter, and stated legislation and past court decisions don't support the governor's advocacy of the tax because of public ownership of natural resources.

"It seems illogical to say that the people of Utah share in the ownership of Kennecott's Bingham mine," Mr. O'Keefe said. "These mining properties derive from 'public domain' which was originally owned by the federal government, rather than by the state of Utah."

"If the public has some theoretical ownership interest in minerals, that interest should pertain equally to all minerals, whether owned by large corporations, small cor-

porations, or individuals. Therefore, even the 'public ownership' concept doesn't justify discrimination against any single operator as is proposed by HB118 (the occupation tax)," he said.

State Benefited

Kennecott and other metal producers haven't benefited from the higher occupation tax rate on the oil industry, Mr. O'Keefe said in refuting what he termed the governor's suggestion that Kennecott has been benefiting from a discrimination against the oil industry. The state has benefited from the higher tax, he said.

Mr. O'Keefe responded to the governor's comment that it is an overstatement to imply the graduated tax would affect employment or future mine productivity. "Believe me, I'm not engaging in overstatement," Mr. O'Keefe said.

Estimated unit costs of production this year will be 25 percent higher than last year, he said. There was a 12 percent increase the year before, he added. The cost of production determines what is mineable ore, and Utah taxes are an uncontrollable part of production costs, he said.

Capacity Falling Again

Productive capacity, even with past capital expenditures, is falling again because of declining grade in ore and precipitate copper, Mr. O'Keefe said.

"In order to restore our losses in capacity, huge capital expenditures will have to be made," he said. "As you know, capital funds are not plentiful, and frankly, the Utah Copper Division, because of its rapidly escalating production costs, has been un-

able to justify the necessary investment. Other copper properties in the West which have better cost patterns have been selected for expansion."

The occupation tax has no relationship to net earnings, Mr. O'Keefe said in response to the governor's point that the company's net earnings have increased about the same proportion as the company's Utah tax bill in the last 10 years.

Copper Prices Decline

The earnings cited by the governor, Mr. O'Keefe said, include those from coal production and other worldwide operations. Copper prices have declined, resulting in a decline in earnings, he said. Over 10 years, the cost of Utah taxes per pound of copper has increased 100 percent, he said. Capital investment has averaged almost \$19 million a year, and more ex-

penditures will have to be made to comply with air and water quality standards, he said.

"Even with reduced earnings, and without any change in the occupation tax, we estimate that our Utah taxes in 1971 can reach a new high of more than \$29 million, 25 percent more than 1970. So here you have the situation where earnings go down and Utah taxes continue to skyrocket. How then, can these taxes be related to earnings?" Mr. O'Keefe asked.



This shot of early maintenance crew wins \$10 in Old Photos series.

old photos

28 Feb 1971

r. r. gang

photo

wins \$10

THIS WEEK'S winner in The Salt Lake Tribune's Old Photos series has a tie-in with something as modern as today — or tomorrow.

With all the talk and action about reviving the old railroad line in Provo Canyon, Mrs. Edward W. Baylor, 1181 Glorieta Drive, submitted the above photo.

It is, she says, one of the maintenance crew for the "Heber Creeper," as the line was affectionately known, and the photo was taken around the turn of the century.

PUBLICATION of this photograph wins for Mrs. Baylor an award of \$10.

The photographs sought by The Tribune are in two categories. For pictures taken at any time and which have a connection with The Tribune, the newspaper will pay \$20. For photographs showing the progress in the state or a community and taken before statehood. (Jan. 4, 1896) the award will be \$10.

PICTURES found suitable will be copied and one print will be retained by The Tribune. In case of duplicate entries, the first one received will be considered for the award. All pictures will be returned. Payments will be made each month.

If you have photos you would like to submit, write your name and address on the back of each. Also include where and when the picture was taken and what it shows.

Mail entries to Old Photos, The Salt Lake Tribune, P.O. Box 867, Salt Lake City, Utah 84110.